



**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF CHILDHOOD - CHILD CARE COMPLIANCE**

**COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS**

DATE OF REPORT
10/6/2021

DVN
002081036

FACILITY NAME

THE GODDARD SCHOOL

FACILITY ADDRESS

1633 KEHRS MILL RD

CITY

CHESTERFIELD

ZIP CODE

63005

PHONE NUMBER

(636) 519-0808

COUNTY

ST LOUIS

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

SPAULDING, STEPHANIE

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)2.

Expectations for a child's behavior shall be appropriate for the developmental level of that child.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)3.

Only constructive, age-appropriate methods of discipline shall be used to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)5.

Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used based on a guideline of one (1) minute of separation for each year of the child's age.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)7.

Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting, or pulling hair shall be prohibited.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

On October 6, 2021, the Office of Childhood received an allegation that staff member Valerie Ann smacked Child A (age 1 1/2) in the hand on 9/1/21 and Child A had a red mark that only lasted for a short period of time. Ms. Valerie was also heard smacking Child B but this was not witnessed, so it's unknown where on Child B's body she was smacked and no injuries were reported. Valerie also smacked Child C on the head but it is unknown how much force was used and no injuries were noted. Based on interviews with the staff of The Goddard School and Parent's A, B, and C; this allegation is found to be substantiated and the following rule violations are being cited.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)2: Expectations for a child's behavior shall be appropriate for the developmental level of that child.
AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)3: Only constructive, age-appropriate methods of discipline shall be used to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions.
AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)7: Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting, or pulling hair shall be prohibited.

On October 8, 2021, caregiver Valerie Meyer stated that she cares for 1-year-old children and that she was given permission from Parent A to hit Child A on the hand if Child A was still not listening after three prompts. She also stated that she did put Child B in time out on the wall for several minutes. Valerie denies hitting Child C on the top of his head.

On October 8, 2021, caregiver, Erin Padding stated that she witnessed caregiver, Valerie Meyer hit Child C and Child A on the top of their head.

On October 8, 2021, caregiver, Mia Gapsch stated that she witnessed caregiver, Valerie Meyer hit Child B while on the playground.

On October 8, 2021, caregiver, Shadia Bakeer stated that she witnessed caregiver, Valerie Meyer hit Child A on the hand. She stated that she was aware that Parent A gave Valerie permission to hit Child A on the hand and that she told management right away about observing Valerie hit Child A. She also stated that Valerie hit Child B on the same day that she observed Valerie hit

Child A. Child B was sitting on the blue mat mimicking Valerie and so Valerie hit Child B. However, she does not know where Valerie hit Child B on her body.

On October 8, 2021, CI Spaulding received and observed an email from caregiver, Erin Padding to board chairperson, Sheila Rinaberger and business partner, Nicole Whitesell. The email was sent on September 9, 2021 at 1:01 pm and stated the following:

"I wanted to bring something to your attention that is extremely concerning to me. On Monday morning, I informed Valerie that one of her children had attempted to bite one of my children. And even though it was an hour after the fact, and the incident had already been handled, she still smacked the child on the top of his head 3 times and yelled "no biting" at him. And this morning, a child tried to lick a book and was told not to do that, but instead of just taking the book away, she hit his mouth and told him no. This time, it was a light tap on the mouth, but it still doesn't make it okay as we are not allowed to be physically disciplining other people's children. Valerie is a very nice person and a great teacher, and I don't want to get her in trouble, but I felt I needed to come forward on behalf of the children."

On October 12, 2021, Parent C stated that the facility is short staffed right now, so she is unsure who is in and out of the classroom. She was not aware of Ms. Valerie hitting Child C on the top of his head until Sheila called her. Child C is teething and biting has been an issue.

On October 18, 2021, Parent A who is also a caregiver at the facility stated that she gave caregiver, Valerie Meyer permission to hit Child A on the back of his hand with two fingers after three cues and not listening. She is not aware of anyone hitting Child A except caregiver, Valerie Meyer.

On October 18, 2021, Parent B stated that she was told that another teacher saw Ms. Valerie hit Child B and that Child B never said anything to her about being hit.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)5: Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used based on a guideline of one (1) minute of separation for each year of the child's age.

On October 8, 2021, caregiver, Mia Gapsch stated that she witnessed caregiver, Valerie Meyer put Child B on the wall (time out) outside for about 30 minutes.

On October 8, 2021, caregiver, Shadia Bakeer stated that Valerie put Child A in time out sitting against the wall for time out, but it wasn't long-about 10 minutes.

Child A, Child B, and Child C are all one year old children that are cared for primarily by caregivers, Valerie Meyer and Nautica Washington.

VIOLATION(S)

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)2.

Expectations for a child's behavior shall be appropriate for the developmental level of that child.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)6.

Firm, positive statements or redirection of behavior shall be used with infants and toddlers.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)8.

No discipline technique which is humiliating, threatening, or frightening to children shall be used. Children shall not be shamed, ridiculed, or spoken to harshly, abusively, or with profanity.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

On October 6, 2021, the Office of Childhood received an allegation that there are concerns that staff members Valerie and Nautica Anye are verbally aggressive. Based on interviews with the staff of The Goddard School, Parent A and Parent B, this allegation is found to be substantiated and the following rule violations are being cited.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)2: Expectations for a child's behavior shall be appropriate for the developmental level of that child.

AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)6: Firm, positive statements or redirection of behavior shall be used with infants and toddlers.

AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)8: No discipline technique which is humiliating, threatening, or frightening to children shall be used.

Children shall not be shamed, ridiculed, or spoken to harshly, abusively, or with profanity.

On October 8, 2021 caregivers, Shadia Bakeer and Erin Padding stated that both caregiver, Valerie Meyer and Nautica Washington have been heard yelling at the children in their classroom. Caregivers, Shadia Bakeer and Erin Padding had

brought their concerns to management in September, 2021. Nautica Washington and Valerie Meyer were heard yelling "no" and "go sit back down" with force and aggression.

CI Spaulding observed documentation indicating that yelling at children aggressively was brought to the attention of management of The Goddard School. Caregiver, Shadia Bakeer's statements to management include "yelling at them for not sitting on the mat", "makes them sit in a corner (time out)", and "seems like kids are in fear of acting out". Caregiver, Erin Padding stated to management "Valerie tapped Child A on the top of his head and said 'no screaming' while all of the children were sitting at the table eating". CI Spaulding conducted an interview with director Christine Smith who stated that this was brought to her attention and she spoke to Ms. Valerie and Ms. Nautica about not yelling aggressively to the children.

On October 18, 2021, Parent B stated that during pick up on August 18, 2021, her father in law saw Valerie yelling at a child (child unknown) and grabbed them aggressively. This was reported to the front office.

On October 18, 2021, Parent A who is also a caregiver at the facility stated Nautica is rude to Child A. She was told there was an incident that Nautica was screaming at Child A on the playground because he was sitting at the end of the slide. Nautica was aggressive often because she would lose her patience. She never heard Nautica yell, but she has heard her be rude in the hallways of the facility. Being very negative. Saying "Child A is being slow and taking forever". The tone was not appropriate.

The children in Valerie and Nautica's classroom that were being yelled at aggressively are one year old children.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
The facility shall notify all staff members of the violations which were substantiated, and specify the actions to be taken by all staff in order to comply with all licensing violations cited. A copy of the memo, letter, or staff meeting agenda(s) shall be submitted to the Office of Childhood.	Yes	4/8/2022

DISPOSITION	DISPOSITION DATE
SUBSTANTIATED	4/12/2022

APPROVING SUPERVISOR
CHRISCO, MARLA L